

WATERTON LAKES NATIONAL PARK

ALBERTA

Location and Description

Waterton Lakes National Park, situated in the extreme southwest corner of the Province of Alberta, was set apart in 1893. It covers an area of 204 square miles along the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains immediately north of the International Boundary. It is one of the most colourful and charming of Canada's mountain playgrounds. Its mountains rise almost abruptly from the plains; their remarkable colouring of purple, green, and gold give to the peaks a warm and brilliant tone.

In 1932, through legislation enacted by Canada and the United States, Waterton Lakes and Glacier National Parks were proclaimed the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.

Waterton Lakes Park headquarters is located at Waterton Park townsite. In the business section of this townsite are to be found the customary services of a modern community. A motion picture theatre and a dance pavilion are operated throughout the summer season. The Post Office is open daily except Sunday. Long distance telephone and telegraph services are available in the townsite.

How to Reach the Park

Waterton Lakes National Park is reached by the Provincial Highway system of Alberta, which connects with the park highways. From the east, approach may be made from Medicine Hat via Lethbridge and Fort Macleod to Pincher Creek (town), and from there south to the park. An alternative route from Lethbridge is through Cardston. From British Columbia on the west, approach may be made via Cameron Pass and Pincher. From the north, a hard-surfaced route may be followed from Edmonton to Calgary or Fort Macleod, and from there to the park, via Pincher. The route also includes the Canadian Pacific Railway to Pincher or Cardston, and by a convenient bus service from these points. Buses leave Lethbridge for the park twice daily in the summer, and by daily except Sunday, way of Pincher Creek. The trip takes approximately three hours. A station bus operates between Pincher Station and Pincher Creek for the convenience of those travelling by train. The bus also makes a daily round trip to Waterton Park.

The most direct approach to Waterton Lakes National Park from the United States is over the Chief Mountain International Highway from Glacier National Park. The Glacier Park Transport Company operates a frequent service over this route. This highway also forms a link in the new hard-surfaced route between Glacier National Park and Banff National Park.

Visitors travelling by air are served by the Trans-Canada Airlines and the Western Airlines which make scheduled stops at Lethbridge.



Golf—The golf course operated by the National Parks Branch is situated on the rolling slopes at the base of Mount Candell, and has a fine scenic setting. It is an 18-hole course and has an exceptionally attractive club-house which is open to visitors. Refreshments are served.

The green fee is \$1.25 for a round of eighteen holes (continuos) with comparable rates for daily, weekly, monthly, and seasonal periods.

Hiking and Climbing—Several well-marked trails in the vicinity of Waterton Park townsite offer fine outings on foot. Three lead to Lake Louise, half a mile from the townsite, Goff Links, two miles, and Bear's Hump (Mount Candell), one mile. Peaks in the vicinity which may be climbed include Mount Candell, 7,812 feet; Bertha Peak, 7,613 feet; Vimy Peak, 7,825 feet; Sofa Mountain, 8,266 feet.

Motoring—Nearly 50 miles of all-weather highways in the park provide delightful drives for motorists. Interesting motor trips might include visits to Glacier National Park via the Chief Mountain International Highway, Cameron Lake via Akamina Road along the valley of Cameron Creek, Red Rock Canyon, reached by following the park highway 2½ miles from Waterton Park townsite to Blakiston Brook bridge, turning left, and following Blakiston Brook (Pass Creek) Valley, and the Waterton Lakes Fish Hatchery situated on Pincher Highway, half a mile north of the Park Registration Office.

Cameron Falls, which is at the edge of the Park townsite and which is one of the finest cascades in the park, is reached by Cameron Falls Drive. A number of fish-rearing ponds, surrounded by beautiful gardens, are located near the Falls.

Motorists travelling northward from Glacier National Park over the Chief Mountain International Highway pass through the picturesque valley of the Belly River. From this highway may trails lead through the eastern portion of Waterton Lakes Park into peaceful solitudes of forest and open foothills where only the wild creatures break the stillness.

Playing Fields—A large open area in the centre of the townsite is used for baseball and other summer sports. A playground for children is also available near the townsite, with chess, tennis swings, and other facilities for children's enjoyment; there is also a wading pool for tots.

Tennis—Tennis courts owned and operated by the National Parks Branch are available free of charge. They are situated near the Royal Canadian Mounted Police Barracks in Waterton Park townsite.



GENERAL INFORMATION

Registration and Motor Licences

All motorists entering Waterton Lakes National Park must register and obtain transient motor licences. Licences are issued for motor vehicles not used for commercial purposes on the following basis:

- (1) Single trip licence: Automobile, 25 cents; auto with trailer attached, 50 cents.
- (2) Licence good for entire season, which is also honoured in Elk Island, Prince Albert, Riding Mountain, and Point Pelee National Parks: Automobile, \$1; auto with trailer attached, \$2.
- (3) Special licence for entire season, which is honoured in all the National Parks of Canada: Automobile, \$2; auto with trailer attached, \$3.

Special licences may be obtained for motor vehicles used for commercial purposes.

The Park Registration Office is situated at the junction of the Pincher, Cardston, and Chief Mountain International Highways, about ½ mile north of Waterton Park townsite.

Park Administration

A resident superintendent is in charge of the administration of Waterton Lakes National Park. The Administration Building, located in Waterton Park townsite, contains the office of the park superintendent. The Park Information Bureau is located at the entrance to the Waterton Park townsite. It is open daily, and information concerning travel, recreation and places of interest may be obtained, as well as literature and detailed maps of the park. The park regulations are enforced by the Park Warden Service and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Wildlife Protection

The National Parks Act requires that all parks shall be maintained and made use of so as to leave them unimpaired for the use of future generations. Therefore, all wildlife within park boundaries is rigidly protected, and hunting and the possession of unlicensed firearms are strictly prohibited. As the parks are game sanctuaries, visitors must not molest any wild animals or birds and their nests. Dogs or cats are not allowed in any national park except under special permission and licence, and must be accompanied by a certificate showing recent inoculation against rabies.



Trail Riding

In the development of Waterton Lakes National Park much thought has been given to the preservation of the landscape in its natural state. To make this scenery more accessible, roads and trails had to be built and these are being extended from year to year. Developments of this nature have been carried out with as little disturbance as possible to the scenery, wildlife habitats, and natural phenomena of the area.

Although many of the park's beauty spots can be viewed from either the highways or the water routes, one has to take to the trails to reach some of the more remote areas. Many places of exceptional scenic interest are within a day's ride of Waterton Park townsite or the park highways, and plenty of saddle-ponies are available for the use of visitors.

More than 150 miles of wide trails are open to visitors who desire to ride. Saddle-horses may be hired from local outfitters. Following are a few of the most popular shorter rides, with the distance one way:

Bertha Lake, 3½ miles; Carthew Lakes, 6 miles; International Boundary (Lake Shore), 5 miles; Goathead Camp (Glacier Park), 9 miles; Cameron Lake (Akamina Highway), 10 miles; Crystall Lake (from Hell Roaring Canyon), 5 miles; Red Rock Canyon, 11 miles.

Another popular ride takes the sightseer over the trail to Bertha Lake, using Waterton Park townsite as a starting point. The trail zig-zags up the side of Mount Richards past several waterfalls and then circles the lake. The waters of this lake are a vivid emerald shade and combine with the darker green of the forests and the red-streaked slopes of the surrounding peaks to form a striking picture.

A somewhat longer trip by trail up Blakiston Brook and its tributary Baerman Brook will provide a delightful experience long to be remembered. The trail winds around Lost Lake, Sage Pass, Twin Lakes, and over South Kootenay Pass. From ideal vantage points one may gaze down into alpine valleys carved by ancient glaciers and nestled by misty and coloured mountains whose slopes are dotted with lovely lakes and tarns. Here the nature lover may study the flora and fauna to his heart's content and the photographer secure some rare scenic gems and wildlife subjects for his snapshot album. The area lends itself admirably to colour photography. There is a good highway up the valley of Blakiston Brook as far as Red Rock Canyon, where the trail to the west boundary of the park begins. This boundary, extending along the summit of the Canadian Rockies, is also the boundary between the Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

The Buffalo Herd

An exhibition herd of plains buffalo occupies a fenced area on the northern boundary of the park, just west of the highway to Pincher Creek. This buffalo range has clumps of poplar trees which provide shelter for the buffalo, and a good year-round water supply from the Indian Springs. There are also several large ponds within the enclosure.

Accommodation

Accommodation in the park is provided by hotels, chalets, lodges and bungalow cabins. Most of the accommodation is located within the townsite, but there are also bungalow cabin establishments at Cameron Lake and Waterton River Bridge. The pamphlet entitled *Accommodation in Canada's National Parks* contains up-to-date information on these accommodations including the name, location, capacity, rates and plan. Copies may be obtained from the Park's Information Bureau or from the Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Ottawa.

Unless visitors are carrying their own camping equipment, or have camp trailers, it is advisable to arrange accommodation in advance.

Camping

Camping has always been popular in the Waterton Lakes area. Since it became a national park, many of the most suitable camp-sites have been improved. Some have been equipped with electricity, running water, kitchen and community shelters, tables, benches, and sanitary facilities. Most of these camp-sites are within reasonable distance of supplies.

The main camp-ground in the park is located in the southern part of the Waterton Park townsite and covers an area of more than 35 acres. It is traversed by Cameron Creek and is part of an alluvial "fan" upon which the townsite is laid out. A gravel school enters good drainage and there are sufficient trees to provide shade for the campers. The area is equipped with kitchen and community shelters, Trailer-alcove, equipped with electric outlets, and sewer and water connections, are located on both sides of Cameron Creek. A caretaker and a matron are on hand during the summer months.



One of the most interesting trail trips in the park is from Waterton Park townsite to Cameron Lake by way of Alderson and Carthew Lakes. From Cameron Lake a trail winds westward through Akamina Brook, and south to Wall Lake in British Columbia.

Trails leading to wilderness areas wind northward from the Registration Office to Yarrow Creek at the extreme northern boundary of the park, and southward from the Registration Office to Vimy Peak and Vimy Ridge. By using Waterton Park townsite as a starting point, sightseeing trips by trail might include a ride along the east side of Upper Waterton Lake to Hell Roaring Canyon. On the west side of Upper Waterton Lake a trail runs southward to Goathead Camp at the head of the lake in Glacier National Park, thus affording opportunities to view some of the magnificent alpine scenery in the southern section of the Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park. A branch of this trail running westward in Glacier National Park crosses the International Boundary and winds northward to Carthew and Alderson Lakes and westward to Cameron Lake, where it joins the Akamina Highway.

Fauna and Flora

Animals and Birds—Wildlife is one of the main attractions of the park. Among the species of big mammals which may be seen are mule and white-tailed deer, grizzly and black bear, Rocky Mountain sheep, Rocky Mountain goat, elk and moose. The whistler or hoary marmot, badger, porcupine, cougar, beaver, and several species of squirrel are also common. Bird life is abundant. The booklet entitled *Birds of Canada's Mountain Parks* is obtainable at the Parks Information Bureau—price, one dollar.

Trees and Flowers—The park contains many species which may interest the botanist and nature lover. For within this area the prairie flora and mountain flora meet. Among the species of trees found are the lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, balsam fir, Engelmann spruce, western white spruce, aspen, cottonwood, dwarf maple, and Lyall's or alpine larch. Shrubs include the diamond willow, saskatoon, elder, wild currant and blueberry.

Wild flowers are found in the valleys and along the mountain slopes in large numbers. Among the best known varieties are the arnica, prairie rose, brown-eyed Susan, aster, Indian paint brush, larkspur, wild geranium, pasque flower, purple pineweed, bellflower, yellow columbine, avalanche lily, saxifrage, heather, and Jacob's ladder. Balmamint and bear grass are among species also found in Waterton Lakes National Park. Visitors are requested to protect the trees and wild flowers and help keep the park beautiful.



Camp-grounds with kitchen shelters are also located at Alderson, Bertha, Cameron, Candell, and Crystall Lakes, and at Red Rock Canyon. At Cameron Lake and Red Rock Canyon, caretakers are in attendance during July and August. Alderson, Bertha, Candell and Crystall Lakes are not accessible by car.

Permits may be obtained from the camp attendants or at the office of the Park Superintendent.

Facilities are provided in the park for youth camping under the auspices of the Boy Scouts, Y.M.C.A., and church organizations.

The publication entitled "Camp-grounds and Trailer Parks in Canada's National Parks" contains up-to-date information, including the name, location, capacity, facilities available and fees, on all camping grounds in the national parks. Copies may be obtained from the park superintendents or from the Canadian Government Travel Bureau at Ottawa.

Recreation

Bathing—A modern outdoor swimming pool which has been erected in Waterton Park townsite is available to park visitors during the summer season. The water in the pool is heated, chlorinated, and in continuous circulation. Dressing rooms containing showers and other facilities are provided for the use of patrons. A wading pool for children, separate from the main pool, has been incorporated in the development. Lifeguard services are also provided. The beach at Lake Louise, a short distance north of the townsite, is ideal for bathing and swimming. Dressing-rooms have been built for the convenience of visitors, and a lifeguard who also acts as caretaker at the beach is in attendance from June to September.

Boating—Boating on Waterton Lakes and Maskinonge Lake is a favourite pastime. Power and rowboats may be hired near the dock at Waterton Park townsite. The powerboats "Intrepid" and "Invincible" makes trips three times daily from Waterton Park townsite up the lake to Goathead Landing in Glacier National Park, at a return fare of \$1.50. Launches are also operated by private enterprise.

Fishing—Consistent use of modern methods, including the operation of the Waterton Lakes Fish Hatchery, is designed to improve angling in the lakes and streams in the park. At the Park Information Bureau in Waterton Park townsite, visitors can obtain a *Fishing Bulletin* which contains up-to-date information about angling.

A fishing licence is required for all mountain national parks, except Glacier and Mount Revelstoke, and may be obtained from the Park Information Bureau or from any park warden.

As special fishing regulations are in force from time to time, visitors are requested to consult park officers regarding open waters, catch limits, and the procuring of fishing licences.

Climbing—The National Parks Regulations require that all persons, before climbing a mountain, shall register with the nearest park warden or other park officer and indicate their proposed route and the duration of the trip. Persons carrying out overnight are subject to the same regulations. Inexperienced climbers should obtain the services of a guide and full information concerning the necessary equipment. Visitors unaccustomed to mountain terrain should exercise great caution when climbing or hiking in unfamiliar country.

Fire Prevention

Camp-fires may be kindled only at places provided for the purpose, and must be completely extinguished before campers leave the site. Persons camping out overnight, at other than established camp-grounds, must first register with the nearest park warden and also obtain a permit to light a camp-fire.

Any fire observed by a park visitor should be extinguished if possible. Fires which cannot be put out promptly should be reported to the nearest park officer. A fire in a national park may cause damage which cannot be repaired in a century.

Films

An outdoor theatre is located in the main camp-grounds where films depicting National Parks of Canada, travel, nature and other subjects are shown three times weekly, free of charge.

Motion picture films, 16 mm., mostly in colour with sound, depicting National Parks of Canada are available through various distribution outlets in Canada and the United States.

Full information can be obtained from all regional offices of the National Film Board in Canada, and from the Canadian Travel Film Libraries at:

111 North Wabash Avenue, CHICAGO 2, Ill., and
630 Fifth Ave., NEW YORK 20, N.Y., U.S.A.

Catalogues of the latest films are available at the Canadian Government Travel Bureau, Ottawa.

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For further information write to:

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